| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Option D is correct | In paragraph 5, Josh quotes Hugh Walpole as saying, "it is better it should go first than last." This context clue that follows the word precedes contains the phrase *go first*, which helps the reader understand that the word precedes means *to come before.* |
| | Option A is incorrect | In paragraph 5, the phrase “come on” is an encouragement to Sherry to pay attention rather than a useful context clue to the meaning of precedes. |
| | Option B is incorrect | In paragraph 5, the phrase “giving me” is used to describe Josh’s interaction with Sherry rather than a context clue to the meaning of precedes. |
| | Option C is incorrect | In paragraph 5, the phrase “friendly nudge” is used to describe the gesture Josh makes, and it does not provide a context clue to the meaning of precedes. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 2 | Option C is correct | Sherry and Josh expected useful results from their “great” idea, which explains why Sherry is surprised that the science experiment failed. |
| | Option A is incorrect | Although people sometimes stare in surprise, in this sentence Josh is staring in dismay. |
| | Option B is incorrect | In this sentence Sherry’s certainty is expressed rather than her surprise. |
| | Option D is incorrect | The word “finally” in this sentence is a clue that Sherry has been aware of something for a long time rather than that she is surprised. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 3 | Option D is correct | Josh's smile after he examines the containers indicates that he agrees with Sherry's new plan, which is the resolution of the story. |
| | Option A is incorrect | In paragraph 17 Josh is smiling because he agrees with Sherry's new plan, not because he finds her entertaining. |
| | Option B is incorrect | Josh's random science quotations suggest that he enjoys doing science projects. However, his actions in paragraph 17 are a reaction to Sherry's new plan. |
| | Option C is incorrect | Since a new plan was proposed in paragraph 16, Josh and Sherry's work continues, which indicates that their work is not completed. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 4 | Option C is correct | In paragraph 1, Sherry describes the hopeless feeling she and Josh share that their experiment is “a disaster” and their science project is “doomed.” With Sherry’s new plan proposed in paragraph 16, Josh and Sherry have gone from feeling hopeless to feeling encouraged: “it looks as if there might be hope for this doomed project after all.” |
| | Option A is incorrect | Although Josh and Sherry are unhappy with the results of their science experiment in the beginning of the story, they do not express anger and they remain calm throughout the story. |
| | Option B is incorrect | Although paragraph 2 provides a description of the effort that Sherry and Josh made in their original experiment to swab “every gross surface,” no information in the story indicates that they felt tired from their efforts. |
| | Option D is incorrect | By the end of the story, Josh and Sherry have not gone from feeling embarrassed to feeling confident, as there is no evidence to support these emotions. Although Josh says in paragraph 21 that “there might be hope” for their project, he stops short of expressing complete confidence that the experiment will succeed. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 5 | Option C is correct | Paragraph 10 includes a description of how, while using the hand sanitizer, Sherry suddenly "had an idea as bright as the summer sun" about the experiment. She and Josh change the focus of their experiment based on her new idea, which leads the plot in a new direction. |
| | Option A is incorrect | Although cleaning bacteria off her hands is the reason Sherry starts using the hand sanitizer, thoroughly washing any bacteria off her hands does not impact the plot. |
| | Option B is incorrect | Paragraph 10 includes the descriptions that Sherry "turned the bottle over" in her hand and that a drop of sanitizer rolled out of Sherry's hand and into one of the petri dishes. There is no indication, however, of how much sanitizer remains in the bottle. |
| | Option D is incorrect | The details in paragraph 10 indicate that Sherry uses the hand sanitizer to clean her hands; she does not use it to clean the kitchen table. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | Option C is correct | In paragraph 20, Sherry reveals to Josh that the advice she quotes in paragraph 18, “sometimes you have to change your question,” came from Josh. By changing the question in their experiment, Sherry was following Josh’s advice from “[l]ast week in science class” (paragraph 20). |
| | Option A is incorrect | Although Sherry mentions the quote being from “one of my favorite scientists,” she uses the quotation to help explain her scientific views rather than her feelings. |
| | Option B is incorrect | In paragraph 19, Josh asks “Who said it?,” which indicates that he does not remember his own words, but Sherry’s purpose for using the quotation is to explain the sudden change she made to their experiment, not to test Josh’s memory. |
| | Option D is incorrect | In paragraph 18, Sherry quotes Josh because she wants to let Josh know that she followed his advice. Her use of Josh’s words is not an indication of comforting Josh as he comforted Sherry earlier in the story after she sadly described their experiment as a “total failure” in paragraph 4. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 7 | Option B is correct | In paragraph 13, Sherry puts a drop of plain water in a petri dish while Josh is following her instruction from paragraph 12 to put a drop from "a cup of soapy water" into a different dish. The contrast between the soapy water and the plain water indicates that plain is used to mean that Sherry's water is pure and free of extra matter. |
| | Option A is incorrect | Paragraph 13 mentions that Sherry labels all four petri dishes. However, the word plain refers to the water, not to any labels or "decoration" that may have been applied to the petri dishes. |
| | Option C is incorrect | The word plain in paragraph 13 is used to describe the quality of the water Sherry puts in the third petri dish. "Not complicated" does not mean the same thing as pure. |
| | Option D is incorrect | The word plain is used in paragraph 13 to describe a scientific characteristic of the water in Sherry and Josh's experiment, rather than the appearance of the water. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 8 | Option B is correct | The use of the pronoun “I” throughout the story indicates that it is told from a first-person point of view, and beginning with paragraph 1, the references to Josh as a different person than “I” reveal that it is Sherry’s point of view. |
| | Option A is incorrect | The use of the pronoun “I” throughout the story indicates that it is told from a first-person point of view. However, beginning with paragraph 1, the references to Josh as a different person than “I” reveal that the story is not told from Josh’s point of view. |
| | Option C is incorrect | The use of the pronoun “I” throughout the story indicates that it is told from a first-person point of view, and famous scientists are quoted in paragraphs 5 and 9. However, Josh’s complaint in paragraph 3 reveals that the pronoun “I” refers to Sherry, which means the story is told from Sherry’s point of view. |
| | Option D is incorrect | The use of the pronoun “I” throughout the story reveals that it is told from a first-person point of view, not third-person from an outside observer. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 9 | Option B is correct | In paragraph 8, the sentence “He chose a camera… instead of a paintbrush” is a context clue that medium is used in the paragraph to refer to a format used for artistic expression. |
| | Option A is incorrect | Although the author includes a mention of the “small” case that Frank Reaugh invented to carry his pastel crayons in paragraph 5, the size of Erwin E. Smith’s camera and photos are not mentioned, so medium is not used to refer to a size. |
| | Option C is incorrect | Paragraph 8 is about Erwin’s desire to “capture cowboy life” rather than to communicate about it to others, so the use of medium in paragraph 8 does not refer to a communication method. |
| | Option D is incorrect | Although the author includes the detail of the “sun burnt plains” that surrounded cowboys in paragraph 7, the word medium is used to refer not to the surroundings, but to the format Erwin chose for his artistic expression. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 10 | Option D is correct | The author provides key information about the two artists in each of the sections, such as how the artists got started, what subjects they liked to show, and what materials they used. |
| | Option A is incorrect | In both sections of the article, the author briefly mentions cow herding, but neither section describes how cattle are herded. |
| | Option B is incorrect | Although the author tells where one of the artists worked in the section titled “Drawings on the Trail,” no such mention is made in the other section. Both sections of the article are used to provide more key information than just where the artists worked. |
| | Option C is incorrect | Information about when the photographs were taken is provided by the captions of the two photos, but that is not the reason why the two sections of the article are included. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 11 | Option B is correct | The most likely reason the author includes the anecdote in paragraph 3 about Frank Reaugh going on a cattle drive is to help explain how Frank was introduced to the West and "became interested in the wildlife and wide open land he saw." |
| | Option A is incorrect | Although the author mentions in the anecdote that Frank was invited "to join" a cattle drive, there is no information about whether he helped with the cattle. |
| | Option C is incorrect | In paragraph 3, the author includes Frank's birth date and information about one move he made "with his family from Illinois to Texas in 1876." The author does not include information in the anecdote that Frank moved around often as a kid. |
| | Option D is incorrect | The author mentions in the anecdote that Frank "became interested" in the wildlife and land of the West. The author does not show how Frank wanted to protect Earth. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 12 | Option C is correct | The most likely reason the poet uses a descriptive structure throughout the poem is to call attention to and praise several special aspects of Western scenery—such as the sun (line 4), snows (line 5), and skies (line 8)—and the culture of the West, including the laughter (line 12), singing (line 18), and giving (line 19). |
| | Option A is incorrect | The repeated line "That's where the West begins" might seem to be used to refer to a location, but the other lines of the poem include aspects of the scenery and the people that make the West special, rather than where it is geographically. |
| | Option B is incorrect | Although the poet includes details about the weather and scenery of the West, the poet does not show how wildlife in the West helps people. |
| | Option D is incorrect | The poet is focused entirely on things that are happening in the present—for example, "a fresher breeze is blowing" (line 11), or "snows that fall are a trifle whiter" (line 5). The poet does not describe the history of the West. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 13 | Option C is correct | The poet uses the imagery of “every streamlet” carrying laughter throughout the landscape in line 12 to suggest that being in the West makes people happy and the imagery in line 13, “more of reaping and less of sowing,” to suggest that, in the West, people are happy because less effort is required for greater reward. |
| | Option A is incorrect | Although the poet includes a mention of flowing water in line 12, the word “streamlet” indicates that the river is very small, so the imagery is not used to show that the rivers are wide. |
| | Option B is incorrect | Line 13 includes mentions of two farming tasks that could be difficult, “reaping” and “sowing.” However, the phrase “there’s more of reaping and less of sowing” suggests that, in the West, people are happy because less effort is required for greater reward. |
| | Option D is incorrect | By including the words “reaping” and “sowing” in line 13, the poet means to illustrate the idea that the West offers rewards, not to indicate that the West offers different activities. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 14 | Option C is correct | The poet not only includes descriptions of the scenery and weather of the West in the first two stanzas of the poem, lines 1 through 14, but also includes descriptions of the way that people behave and live, “Out where the smile dwells a little longer” (line 2) and “Where the bonds of home are a wee bit tighter” (line 6). The poet’s message that the West is not only a place but a way of life continues in the last stanza, lines 15 through 21, by showing that in the West there is “more of giving and less of buying” (line 19). |
| | Option A is incorrect | The poet reveals in some lines of the poem that people in the West seem to do things differently than people elsewhere. For example, “the handclasp’s a little stronger” (line 1). However, there is no indication that any of the differences break rules. |
| | Option B is incorrect | The poet refers to the sun in line 4 and snow in line 5. But these lines are used to describe the superiority of the weather when it happens (“the sun is a little brighter” in line 4 and the snow is “a trifle whiter” in line 5), not to show that the weather changes quickly. |
| | Option D is incorrect | The repeated line “That’s where the West begins” might seem to be used to refer to a location, but the poet does not include details that refer to the size of the West or any geographic information about how to locate the West. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 15 | Option A is correct | In paragraph 4 of the article, the author quotes Frank Reaugh's opinion that " '[n]o animal on Earth has the beauty of the Texas steer.' " In paragraph 7, the author of the article describes how Erwin E. Smith "fell in love with the views of the 'sun burnt plains of the West, with its grand scenery.' " The poet mentions the beauty of the West's sun (line 4), snows (line 5), skies (line 8), breezes (line 11), and streams (line 12). These details from the article and the poem support the key idea that the beauty of the West matters to the people who live there. |
| | Option B is incorrect | Support for the idea that people in the West are friendly can be found in line 9 of the poem, "Out where friendship's a little truer," and in line 20 of the poem, "And a man makes friends without half trying." But the article includes no mention of the potential friendliness of people in the West. |
| | Option C is incorrect | The author provides information in the article that both Frank Reaugh and Erwin E. Smith realized the West was changing; Smith is praised in paragraph 9, for providing " 'the most complete account of the passing west.' " But the poet refers to current situations and not how the West began to change for the people who lived there. |
| | Option D is incorrect | The author provides specific details in the article about two interesting artists and mentions in paragraph 2 "[s]everal artists." The poet includes general references to happy relationships ("the friendship's a little truer" [line 9]) and happy people who have "more of singing and less of sighing" (line 18) but does not mention specific people who stand out as especially interesting. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 16 | Option C is correct | Although the author of the article mentions in paragraph 6 the respect Frank Reaugh's students had for him and in paragraph 9 the admiration people had for Erwin E. Smith's work, only the poet praises how ordinary people treat each other day to day. For example, line 9 includes the detail that "friendship's a little truer" in the West. |
| | Option D is correct | The author of the article dwells on the disappearance of the "Old West" (paragraph 2) as a change for the worse. Only the poet writes that everything is still better in the West, "[o]ut where the skies are a trifle bluer" (line 8). |
| | Option A is incorrect | The poet concentrates on depictions of situations that are ongoing in the West, such as the "laughter in every streamlet" (line 12), rather than on how life is changing. |
| | Option B is incorrect | The poet mentions "reaping" and "sowing," which are both farming terms, but does not specifically mention farming or its importance to the West. Both the author and the poet appreciate the value of ranching, a branch of agriculture related to but separate from farming. |
| | Option E is incorrect | Although the poet praises the virtues of people who already live in the West, he does not indicate that more people should move to the West. The author quotes Frank Reaugh's concern about watching as "industry took over the lands" (paragraph 5), suggesting that the author would not encourage people to move to the West. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 17 | Option D is correct | In the article, Frank Reaugh is described in paragraph 6 as "very popular as a teacher," supporting the conclusion that people valued his teaching and artwork related to the landscapes of the West. The poet's praise of the West as a place where "the sun is a little brighter" (line 4) and "the snows that fall are a trifle whiter" (line 5) also supports the conclusion that people appreciated the landscapes of the West. |
| | Option A is incorrect | The author includes praise in the article for Erwin E. Smith's photography of cowboys, which supports the conclusion that people of the West respect the skills of cowboys, but the poet does not include details about the skills of cowboys. |
| | Option B is incorrect | The author includes information that Frank Reaugh moved to Texas when he was a teen, which could support the conclusion that people of the West came from many different places, but artist Erwin E. Smith grew up in Texas (paragraph 7). The poet makes no mention of anyone moving to the West from elsewhere and suggests in line 6, "[w]here the bonds of home are a wee bit tighter," that many people of the West were born and raised there. |
| | Option C is incorrect | Both artists in the article express concern rather than contentment about the landscapes and lifestyles that were disappearing during their time, although the poet's praise of many aspects of the weather, scenery, and culture of the West supports the conclusion that people of the West were content about where they lived. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 18 | Option B is correct | In paragraph 10, because the aquifer "is a source of" water, this context clue supports that provides has a meaning similar to "gives." |
| | Option A is incorrect | In paragraph 10, provides does not have the same meaning as "cleans." Provides refers to what the aquifer "gives" to people and agriculture. |
| | Option C is incorrect | In paragraph 10, provides does not have the same meaning as "moves." The water from the aquifer provides or "gives" water for agriculture. It is not correct to say that the aquifer "moves" water for agriculture. |
| | Option D is incorrect | In paragraph 10, provides does not have the same meaning as "wastes." The water from the aquifer provides or "gives" water for agriculture rather than "wastes" water for agriculture. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 19 | Option D is correct | Paragraphs 4 and 5 are organized to provide descriptive details about where salamanders live and how they look. |
| | Option A is incorrect | The phrase “[t]hat means” in paragraph 4 is one that could be used to introduce an effect in a cause-and-effect organization. However, in these paragraphs, the phrase introduces a descriptive detail about why salamanders “can live in water and on land.” |
| | Option B is incorrect | The information in paragraphs 4 and 5 is not organized chronologically, which is a pattern that describes events in the order that they happened. |
| | Option C is incorrect | Although the author includes the detail that “[s]alamanders look like lizards, but they are a kind of amphibian” in paragraph 4 to make a comparison to lizards, the remaining details in paragraphs 4 and 5 are not used to further describe any similarities or differences. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 20 | **Part A** | |
| | Option A is correct | In paragraph 9, the author introduces the central idea that the Austin Blind Salamander "does an important job," and the remainder of the article is used to provide details to support that idea. |
| | Option B is incorrect | Although the author includes information in paragraphs 4 and 5 that is true of all salamanders, most of the details in the article are about the Austin Blind Salamander and the important job it does for the people of Austin, not about scientists' study of how different salamanders behave. |
| | Option C is incorrect | The author includes in paragraph 12 that to stay healthy, Austin Blind Salamanders need their water to "stay around 70 degrees." However, this is a detail about the Austin Blind Salamander and not the central idea of the article. |
| | Option D is incorrect | Although paragraphs 1 through 3 are used to describe how difficult it may be for people to see the fast-moving Austin Blind Salamander, the author does not imply that the central idea of the article is that people should visit the Austin Blind Salamanders. The author focuses on the important role of the Austin Blind Salamanders, not the overall idea that people should go see them. |
| | **Part B** | |
| | Option C is correct | This sentence from paragraph 11 that "The salamanders are key to keeping the balance of animals the same, which means that the water stays healthy" is used to support the central idea that the Austin Blind Salamanders play an important role in their environment. |
| | Option A is incorrect | This sentence from paragraph 5 that "Salamanders are generally long and skinny" is used as a detail that supports what salamanders look like but does not support the central idea that the Austin Blind Salamanders play an important role in their environment. |
| | Option B is incorrect | The author uses this sentence from paragraph 10 that the aquifer "is a source of drinking water for over 2 million people" to support the importance of the cleanliness of the Edwards Aquifer water, not to support the central idea that the Austin Blind Salamanders play an important role in their environment. |
| | Option D is incorrect | This sentence from paragraph 12, "To stay healthy, the water in the aquifer needs to keep moving and stay around 70 degrees" is used to support the idea that the Austin Blind Salamanders need to live in certain temperatures. However, the author does not use the sentence to support the central idea that the Austin Blind Salamanders play an important role in their environment. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 21 | Option B is correct | This summary of the section “Texas’s Special Salamander” captures the most important details: where the Austin Blind Salamander lives and the features that make it well-adapted to its habitat. |
| | Option A is incorrect | Although this summary includes information about aquifers, as stated in paragraph 7 of the section “Texas’s Special Salamander,” it omits the important details of where the Austin Blind Salamander lives and its special features. |
| | Option C is incorrect | This summary includes some general details from paragraphs 7 and 8, which are in the section “Texas’s Special Salamander,” but it does not summarize the most important details of the section. |
| | Option D is incorrect | Although this summary includes information about the aquifer beneath Barton Springs, as stated in paragraph 7 of the section “Texas’s Special Salamander,” it does not include what makes the Austin Blind Salamander well-suited for the place in which it lives. This summary also includes unnecessary information about other types of salamanders. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 22 | Option C is correct | The author includes the description in paragraph 7 that an aquifer is "a layer of rock with holes going through it" to indicate a similarity to a honeycomb. |
| | Option A is incorrect | Because the aquifer is described in paragraph 7 as "[b]elow Barton Springs," it might seem that the comparison to honeycomb refers to how deep aquifers are. However, the comparison to honeycomb is used to describe "holes going through" (paragraph 7) the rock of the aquifer. |
| | Option B is incorrect | The author includes the detail in paragraph 7 that the Edwards Aquifer contains "water-filled caves," which may suggest that the comparison to honeycomb is used to describe how big an aquifer is. However, the comparison is used to describe the arrangement of "holes going through" (paragraph 7) the rock of the aquifer, rather than the size of the holes. |
| | Option D is incorrect | Although the author includes information in paragraph 7 that "[a]n aquifer is a layer of rock," it is the detail of "holes going through" the rock that describes how aquifers look. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 23 | Option D is correct | In paragraph 7, the author includes the information that the Austin Blind Salamander “almost never swims to the surface” and stays “underwater for most of its life,” making it a rare sight. |
| | Option A is incorrect | The details in paragraph 8 that the Austin Blind Salamanders “are a shiny white, similar to pearls, while others are a light purple” make it unlikely that the Austin Blind Salamanders can blend into the water. |
| | Option B is incorrect | The Austin Blind Salamanders are “between half an inch and three inches long” (paragraph 8), which suggests that they are visible. However, the Austin Blind Salamander “is so skilled at living in deep, dark places that it almost never swims to the surface” (paragraph 7). |
| | Option C is incorrect | Although the Austin Blind Salamander is described in paragraph 7 as “so skilled at living in deep, dark places that it almost never swims to the surface,” there is no evidence in the article to support the idea that the Austin Blind Salamanders are purposely hiding. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 24 | Option A is correct | This paraphrase accurately restates the meaning of the sentences from paragraph 11. It includes the important ideas that the Austin Blind Salamander “hunts other animals,” that if it didn’t hunt “there would be a lot more of their prey animals in the environment,” and that a large number of prey animals “could make the water unsafe to drink.” |
| | Option B is incorrect | This paraphrase does not accurately restate the important ideas of the sentences from paragraph 11. The idea that the Austin Blind Salamanders are the only animals that live in the aquifer is not supported by the details in paragraph 11, as the author states that the Austin Blind Salamanders “hunt other animals.” |
| | Option C is incorrect | This paraphrase includes an inaccurate idea that is not supported by the sentences from paragraph 11. In these sentences, the author states that without the Austin Blind Salamander “there would be a lot more prey animals” in the aquifer, but the author does not state that those prey animals would hunt there. |
| | Option D is incorrect | The Austin Blind Salamanders are a “keystone species . . . that hunt other animals” and do not need to be protected from predators. This paraphrase includes inaccurate ideas that cannot be supported by the sentences from paragraph 11. |

| Item # | Rationale |
|---|---|
| 25 | For ECR items, please refer to the scoring guide. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 26 | Option B is correct | The description of the prize as “Global” in sentence 2 and the description in sentence 1 that the prize is given at a gathering of “thousands of teachers” support the inference that the phrase “an important” is the best choice of words to replace the phrase “a very big.” |
| | Option A is incorrect | The words “one large” do not emphasize the importance of the prize. |
| | Option C is incorrect | The phrase “some huge” is not the best replacement, as “some” indicates that something is unknown or unspecified and does not emphasize the importance of the prize. |
| | Option D is incorrect | The “prize” is identified as the “Global Teacher Prize,” which makes the phrase “this certain” an incorrect phrase to replace “a very big.” |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 27 | Option D is correct | This sentence helps Kinsley better state the central idea of the paper and is supported by the details in sentences 19 through 29 that Tabichi is making a difference in children's lives. |
| | Option A is incorrect | Although the money is mentioned again in sentence 30, the large amount of prize money and Tabichi's gratitude for it are details, not the central idea of the paper. |
| | Option B is incorrect | This sentence is an opinion that is not supported by the details of the paper. |
| | Option C is incorrect | This sentence repeats information already stated in sentence 2, which does not help Kinsley better state the central idea of the paper. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 28 | Option B is correct | "Therefore" is the best transition to connect the cause stated in sentence 11 ("Tabichi wanted to help these children") with the effect stated in sentence 12, "He decided to become a teacher at their school." |
| | Option A is incorrect | "However" is a transition used to show a difference(s) between ideas and is not the best transition to connect the cause-and-effect ideas between sentences 11 and 12. |
| | Option C is incorrect | "Overall" is a transition used to conclude an idea. Because sentence 12 is not the conclusion of the paragraph, it is not the best transition to add to the beginning of sentence 12. |
| | Option D is incorrect | "Finally" is a transition to show order. It is not the best transition to add to the beginning of sentence 12, because it suggests that Tabichi took a long time or used a complex process to make his decision, and there are no details in this paper to indicate this. |

| Item # | Rationale |
|---|---|
| 29 | For SCR items, please refer to the scoring guide. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 30 | Option D is correct | This sentence is the best sentence to add after sentence 3 because it improves the introduction of the story by including details that help the reader understand the description of Baxter as “a morning person” in sentence 3. |
| | Option A is incorrect | This sentence does not improve the introduction of the story, because it repeats information about the early time that is provided in sentence 2. |
| | Option B is incorrect | This sentence adds unnecessary details about Baxter’s clothing and does not improve the introduction of the story, as this sentence does not support the idea that Baxter is a “morning person.” |
| | Option C is incorrect | This sentence does not improve the introduction of the story, because details about Chuck’s father do not support the idea that Baxter is a morning person. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 31 | Option D is correct | Sentence 10 repeats the information in sentence 9 that Chuck and Baxter had waited for the bus together the whole time Chuck was in school. |
| | Option A is incorrect | The information in sentence 5 that Baxter and Chuck “were usually the only kids” at the bus stop is not repeated information in the third paragraph. |
| | Option B is incorrect | The details that Baxter “was in fifth grade” and Chuck “was in fourth” are not repeated in the third paragraph. |
| | Option C is incorrect | The information in sentence 7 that Baxter treated Chuck “like a little brother” is not repeated in the third paragraph. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 32 | Option A is correct | This revised sentence correctly replaces the misused noun “a giggle” in sentence 13 with the verb “giggled” to describe Chuck’s actions in the past. |
| | Option B is incorrect | This revised sentence replaces the word “giggle” in sentence 13 with the word “giggling,” which is not consistent with the use of the past tense of “listened.” |
| | Option C is incorrect | This revised sentence correctly replaces the misused noun “a giggle” in sentence 13 with the verb “giggled” to describe Chuck’s actions in the past. However, this is not the best way to revise sentence 13, because it also replaces the conjunction “so” with “or,” changing the meaning of the original sentence 13. |
| | Option D is incorrect | The conjunction “and” is incorrectly added to this revised sentence to suggest that Baxter is both speaking and listening, while Chuck is simply giggling. In context, Chuck listens and giggles. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 33 | Option B is correct | This revision of sentence 19 avoids the phrase “describing and telling,” in which two words share the same meaning. |
| | Option A is incorrect | Moving the phrase “his new house” to the end of the revised sentence creates an error of confusion about what Baxter is describing and whether Chuck tries to act interested in his words or in the house itself. |
| | Option C is incorrect | This is not the best revision of sentence 19, because the phrase “to the telling about it” at the end of the sentence uses “telling” as a noun, which is awkward because telling should function as a verb in this sentence. |
| | Option D is incorrect | This sentence changes the meaning of the original sentence 19 by making Baxter, rather than Chuck, the one who is acting interested. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 34 | Option A is correct | The number “15” in sentence 3 shows that Jessica is writing about more than one year. Changing the singular possessive word “year’s” to the plural word “years” is needed. |
| | Option B is incorrect | Jessica correctly uses “later” in sentence 3 to refer to the time following 15 years. Changing “later” to “latter,” which generally refers to something specifically ordered toward the end of a list, is not needed. |
| | Option C is incorrect | Because Jessica is referring to all the people who lived in Texas and not to a group with the formal name “People of Texas,” changing “people” to “People” is not needed. |
| | Option D is incorrect | Jessica uses “broke” in sentence 3, which is the correct past-tense form of the verb “break.” Changing the past tense of the verb “broke” is not needed in this sentence and “breaked” is not a known word. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 35 | Option D is correct | Replacing the word “they” after “Texas” with the word “and” corrects the run-on sentence to show that the people of Texas took two actions at the same time. |
| | Option A is incorrect | With the addition of a period after “Republic of Texas” and the removal of “they,” “And proudly created their own flag” becomes a sentence fragment because it does not contain a subject." |
| | Option B is incorrect | This option changes the meaning of the original sentence 4 by incorrectly indicating that Texans took two actions to make their flag (“established and proudly created their own flag”), rather than one action to establish the republic and another action to create the flag. The second sentence is a sentence fragment and creates a new error in this correction. |
| | Option C is incorrect | The addition of the word “for” in the first sentence suggests the people’s actions were on behalf of the Republic of Texas, not actions that led to the creation of the Republic of Texas. The second sentence is a sentence fragment and creates a new error in this correction. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 36 | Option D is correct | The use of “It’s,” “and has,” and “star” in sentence 6 to describe the Texas flag is correct. No change is needed. |
| | Option A is incorrect | The contraction “It’s,” which means “It is,” to say what the colors of the Texas flag are in sentence 6 is used correctly. |
| | Option B is incorrect | Changing “and has” to “it has” creates the error of a run-on sentence. |
| | Option C is incorrect | The word “a” before “large, white star” in sentence 6 indicates one star, not many stars. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 37 | Option B is correct | The simple past-tense verb “became” is the correct way to indicate that the event happened in the past and is completed. |
| | Option A is incorrect | Because the writer says in sentence 7 that the event happened in the past, “In 1845,” it is incorrect to use the present-tense verb “becomes.” |
| | Option C is incorrect | Although Texas’s change to statehood was completed long in the past, “In 1845,” it is incorrect to change the verb to “had became,” which is not a correct form of the past tense. |
| | Option D is incorrect | Because the writer says in sentence 7 that the event happened in the past, “In 1845,” it is incorrect to use the future-tense verb “will become.” |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 38 | Option C is correct | Changing “but” to “so” in sentence 4 better expresses the cause and effect in the sentence: she suggested making slime because she had learned how to do so at summer camp. |
| | Option A is incorrect | Both “learned” and “learnt” share the same meaning, so a change is not needed. |
| | Option B is incorrect | The comma is correctly used before the conjunction “but” to separate two independent clauses. It should not be removed. |
| | Option D is incorrect | Because the entire journal entry describes something that happened in the past, the use of the past-tense verb “suggested” in sentence 4 is correct. A change to the present tense “suggest” is not needed. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 39 | Option B is correct | The titles of magazines are capitalized. Changing *Science kids* to *Science Kids* is the correct change. |
| | Option A is incorrect | Because the entire journal entry describes something that happened in the past, the past-tense verb “used” in sentence 5 should not be changed to the present-tense verb “use.” |
| | Option C is incorrect | The comma in sentence 5 correctly comes before the conjunction “and” to separate two independent clauses. It should not be removed. |
| | Option D is incorrect | The entire journal entry describes something that happened in the past, so the correct use of the past-tense verb “had” in sentence 5 should not change to the present-tense verb “have.” |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 40 | Option C is correct | In sentence 6, “easier” should be changed to “easy” because the ease of making slime is not compared to the ease of making anything else. |
| | Option A is incorrect | The correct use of the singular pronoun “it” in sentence 6 refers to slime. The pronoun “they” would in this case be used for multiple objects, so changing “it” to “they” is not needed. |
| | Option B is incorrect | The present-tense verb “is” in sentence 6 refers to slime being really easy to make. Although past-tense verbs throughout the journal entry are correctly used to describe Elliana and Max’s actions, “is really” should not be changed to “was really,” because its easiness to make is an ongoing characteristic of slime. |
| | Option D is incorrect | The use of the verb form “to make” in sentence 6 describes a characteristic of slime. “For making” requires a noun to follow this verb form, which would change the meaning of sentence 6. |

| Item # | Rationale | |
|---|---|---|
| 41 | Option A is correct | A comma after “gooey” should be added to separate the first of three words describing slime. |
| | Option B is incorrect | The word “stretchy” is spelled correctly in sentence 7. It should not be changed to the incorrect spelling “strechy.” |
| | Option C is incorrect | The word “and” is used correctly in sentence 7 as a part of a series of three positive adjectives that describe slime. It should not be changed to “but,” because that would indicate a shift—for example, that the first two adjectives in the series described negative characteristics of slime but the final adjective described a positive characteristic. |
| | Option D is incorrect | The word “with” is correctly combined with “play” in sentence 7 to describe the use of a toy. The word “by” indicates how someone does something and is usually followed by a noun. |